

The Alexandria Gazette.

FRIDAY EVENING, MAY 23, 1862.

GENERAL NEWS.

One of the passengers of the steamer Scotia, from Liverpool, was suspected of being a Confederate agent, and detained. It was stated that his correspondence, public and private, was seized, and that there was evidence of his agency, and that he had purchased arms and munitions of war for the Confederates. We learn, however, that his arrest was not perfected, and that there was not sufficient proof to warrant his detention.

By the census of 1850, it appears that upon a comparison of the deaths in the free States, with the deaths among the free population in the slave States, the ratio was 1.40 in the former and 1.33 in the latter. These census returns, we know, are not wholly reliable, but this fact of an excess of deaths in the free States is rendered probable by other proofs. It is ascribed by some to the greater proportion of rural population in the slave States.

The London system of printing one side of country newspapers in the city and then sending the edition to the respective offices in the country, to have the local news and advertisements added, has been adopted by several papers in Wisconsin, the work being performed by the State Journal at Madison.

The misunderstanding existing between Great Britain and Liberia in reference to the boundaries of the Republic and the Colony of Sierra Leone is in a fair way to be adjusted, Earl Russell having proposed that commissioners be appointed by each Government to adjust this and any other subject of difference between the two nations or their citizens.

Messrs. Richard Wallach and James F. Haliday, are the opposing candidates for Mayor of the city of Washington. Mr. H. is the candidate of the party "opposed to Republicanism and Abolitionism."

The issue which it was indicated was to be made on one of the cases of fugitives from Maryland, for testing the fugitive slave law in the District of Columbia, (or rather the manner in which it should be administered,) has been heard and decided in accordance with the heretofore approved construction of the law of Congress. The case was that of Stephen, claimed as the property of Mr. Charles H. Hill, of Prince George's county, Md.

A letter dated Des Moines, Iowa, May 14, says:—"The tide of a most immense emigration westward continues to pour steadily through our streets. Day after day, and for week after week, we have had a constant succession of the long emigrant trains, toiling slowly and patiently in the direction of the distant West. A very large majority of this emigration is going to California—the remainder to Colorado and Oregon."

Gen. Viele, the military governor of Norfolk, has directed the provost marshal to arrest any person who shall by word or act show any disrespect to the U. S. government, or the citizens of the same, on account of their loyalty.

It seems to be pretty certain that the cotton destroyed along the Mississippi and Red rivers since the capture of New Orleans, will amount fully to one hundred thousand bales.

A letter from Fredericksburg, Va., says:—"The number of blacks who have left their masters and sought protection within the Department of the Rappahannock, and who are now provided for by the government, is, according to the statement, of the officers who have immediate charge of them, about 1,000. All the able-bodied men, from the age of 18 to 60 are immediately furnished with employment; the women and children are sent to Washington."

The document published in the New Orleans Delta, purporting to be a protest from the commander of the French war vessel now lying in that port, against the bombardment of the city by the Federal fleet, is pronounced a forgery. The Evening Delta of the same city says that it is "repudiated by the parties in whose name, it purports to be addressed."

The firing on the flag of truce at City Point has created great excitement. The Galena had anchored off the place, and her commander, it is reported, threatened to shell it, but the few inhabitants there having protested that the outrage was perpetrated by parties unknown to them, the punishment was not inflicted.

In the cases of two fugitives, taken from the 76th N. Y. Regiment, in Washington, yesterday, after proof of property, the question was raised by Mr. Dean, whether, "the negroes being in the service of the U. S. government, they could be taken from that service under the process going on." The Commissioner postponed his decision.

An effort will shortly be made to have a Congressional investigation of the recent frauds at the Philadelphia arsenal. The facts, as reported to the War Department, are almost incredible.

Captain Washington Galt, of Baltimore, was lost at sea on the 14th February. Captain G. was master of the bark Indus, now sailing under the British flag, and the accident occurred whilst that vessel was on her voyage from Cardiff, Wales, to Rio de Janeiro.

All the sick and wounded are being removed from Fredericksburg to the Washington and Alexandria hospitals, and several fine buildings in Fredericksburg have been taken possession of by the military authorities for the comfort of those who may, hereafter, be unable to come farther.

On Wednesday, as a train, having on board a number of Confederate prisoners, was coming over to Aquia, one of them sprang from the car while at full speed, but was followed by two of the Ninety-first New York regiment, and immediately recaptured. Strange to say, no one was hurt.

The U. S. District Court in New York, has ordered the restitution to her owners of the British steamer Labuan, captured as a prize last February by the U. S. frigate Portmouth.

Dr. Breckinridge has presented to the Presbyterian General Assembly, (O. S.) at Columbus, a paper strongly condemning secession, and advocating a support of the Federal government.

A special Cairo dispatch to the N. Y. Tribune says that captains of steamers plying between there and the flotilla report over a thousand refugees below New Madrid, and that the banks of the river are fairly lined with their baggage, to be taken aboard and carried North.

The Washington Star says: "Yesterday due experiments were made at the navy-yard here to test the capability of the description of iron armor adopted by our Navy Department to resist shot. It was found that it amounts to a perfect shield against such ordnance as easily pierced armor (in England) precisely similar to that of the celebrated Warrior."

A New York letter to the Philadelphia Inquirer says: "I am inclined to believe from conversation with a very intelligent American, long a resident of Paris, who has returned home in the Scotia, that there is much more in the 'intervention' talk than the public are willing to believe. 'Siddell and other agents of the Confederate states are very busy both in London and Paris.'"

The new iron Cunard steamship Scotia, just arrived at New York, is, except the Great Eastern, the largest steamer in the world.

The Nashville Union of the 18th instant says:—"Yesterday the streets were alive with drays and wagons hauling cotton from the depot to the river."

"The 'oath law' as amended by the Legislature at Wheeling, includes the clerks or agents of all persons required to take out a license.

The New Orleans Bee of the 8th does not think the yellow fever will visit the city this year. It says: "The mayor and municipal authorities have been allowed to retain their power and privileges in everything unconnected with military affairs." No difficulties have taken place between the soldiers and citizens.

The U. S. House of Representatives has now evening sessions for speeches. Mr. Kerrigan of N. Y., made a speech yesterday, "in opposition to ultra measures."

There is no intelligence from the Federal commanders near Corinth. Confederate deserters report that one week since Gen. Beauregard had one hundred and thirty thousand men in his camps, but they were poorly supplied with food and much sickness prevailed among them.

Dates from Newbern, N. C., to Monday morning last, are brought by an arrival at Fortress Monroe. In military matters, there is nothing beyond some picket skirmishing. The troops are in good health and living well. Mr. Stetson, formerly of the Astor House has opened the "Gaston House" at Newbern.

The Governor of Massachusetts has sent word to Washington that his state will promptly contribute her quota of additional troops.

The Washington Star speaking of the disturbance in Washington, yesterday, in relation to the fugitive slaves who went off with a regiment, embarked at that place, says that "a deputy marshal, went, with the necessary papers to the steamboat to take the remaining fugitives," but they were refused admission, and that the officers and soldiers would not allow the rendition to be made.

The Federal loss at the battle at McDowell, in Western Virginia, called in some of the accounts the "battle of Bull Mountain," which took place on the 8th of May, was two hundred and fifty in killed and wounded.

Mr. Hamlin, the Vice President of the U. S. has returned to Washington, and presides over the Senate.